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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 5783rd meeting of the Security Council, held on 21 November 2007, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Great Lakes region", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council commends the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Rwanda for their joint communiqué on a common approach to end the threat posed to peace and stability in both countries and the Great Lakes Region, signed in Nairobi on 9 November 2007 (S/2007/679, annex), which is an important milestone towards the definitive settlement of the problem of illegal armed groups in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"The Security Council expresses its appreciation for the efforts undertaken in this respect by the Secretary-General through the special mission carried out by Assistant Secretary-General Haile Menkerios and looks forward to a continuation of this involvement, including further consultations with the Governments concerned and regional and international partners.

"The Security Council recalls that the continued presence of illegal armed groups, in particular the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), ex-FAR/Interahamwe and the dissident militia of Laurent Nkunda, is one of the root causes of conflict in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and constitutes a threat to regional stability. The Council reiterates its demand that these groups lay down their arms and engage voluntarily and without preconditions in their demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration, as appropriate.

"The Security Council encourages the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Rwanda to implement fully their commitments in the Nairobi communiqué and to continue to cooperate to solve their common security concerns.

"The Security Council stresses its readiness to facilitate and support the implementation of these commitments, in particular through measures against additional individuals and entities, including the FDLR and ex-FAR/Interahamwe, as appropriate, pursuant to resolutions 1596 (2005) and 1649 (2005).

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"The Security Council reiterates its full support to the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for its action on the ground, and encourages it to support, within its mandate and capabilities, the measures agreed by the Congolese and Rwandan Governments."